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NEWS RELEASE

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced today that Naran J. Ivanchukov, age 67 of McLean, Virginia, Rex B. Wingerter, age 52 of Hyattsville, Maryland, Bemba Balsirov age 50 of New Jersey, and Robert J. Mahood, age 41 of Pennsylvania, were charged in a superseding indictment alleging conspiracy, immigration fraud, money laundering, and misprision of felony.

The indictment alleges that Ivanchukov, the owner of Global Recruitment and Immigration Services, Inc., and Wingerter, Global's general counsel, conspired with Balsirov, Mahood, and others to submit to the Department of Labor and other government agencies, fraudulent immigration-related documents in an effort to obtain "green cards" for aliens. According to the indictment, the defendants filed hundreds of fraudulent applications for alien labor certification claiming that the aliens would work for employers in Virginia, Maryland, and New Jersey, when in fact the jobs did not exist.

The indictment also alleges that the defendants falsely claimed that the employers had tried and failed to find qualified U.S. workers to fill the positions, which is a requirement for this employment-based visa program. In fact, according to the indictment, one of the employers was laying off U.S. workers while the defendants were claiming the aliens would work there, and signatures had been forged in the case of other employers. The indictment also names Paul V. Mederos, who was a manager for one of the employers, as an unindicted co-conspirator. Mederos, who pled guilty to related charges in July 2004, admitted that he was paid \$211,000 by Global to sign fraudulent labor certifications.

U.S. Attorney McNulty stated: "Today's charges represent another important step in cracking down on those who would circumvent this Nation's immigration laws for their own gain. Our immigration system must operate with accuracy and integrity to ensure that America is protected."

The Honorable Gordon S. Heddell, Inspector General, United States Department of Labor, said: "Schemes of this scale compromise the integrity of the labor certification process. My office is dedicated to working closely with other law enforcement agencies to combat the fraudulent filing of foreign labor certification applications and bringing to justice those who profit from these criminal acts."

The case was investigated by a team lead by special agents with the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General, with the assistance of agents from the Internal Revenue

Service, Criminal Investigations, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of State, and the Department of Homeland Security. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys James P. Gillis and John T. Morton.

It is assumed that all defendants are innocent until proven guilty.